



'サモアについてのうた (Samoa ni tsuite no uta) | A song about Sāmoa' (2019–) detail by Yuki Kihara. Funding received from Creative New Zealand – the national arts development agency of the Government of New Zealand. Courtesy of Yuki Kihara and Milford Galleries Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand.

CENTRE FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES IN SOCIETY AND CULTURE

‘サモアについてのうた

(Samoa ni tsuite no uta) A song about Sāmoa'

Thursday, June 13, 2019,
5:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Concordia University, EV Building, York Auditorium
EV.1-615, 1515 Saint-Catherine St. W.

In this keynote presentation, Yuki Kihara discusses her new body of work whose title is adapted from a popular Japanese song entitled 'サモア島の歌 (Samoatou no uta)' meaning 'A song from Samoa.' Music textbooks for elementary school students in Japan feature the song. The lyrics describe the Samoan archipelago situated in the Moana (Indigenous pan-Polynesian name for Pacific continent) as a paradise on earth settled by "noble savages" – a typically romantic, Orientalist imagining of neighbouring Island nations held by Japan dating back to the Edo period in the seventeenth century. The work serves to subvert the colonial gaze by shedding light on the lived experience in the Moana while reframing the relationship between Japan and the Moana and specifically Sāmoa, taking an Indigenous interpretation of trans-Moana identity, gender, and history, while referencing the interracial Samoan and Japanese heritage as a point of conceptual departure. This lecture explores the conceptual threads behind the work's first five of twenty 'Indigenised' kimono presented across five iterations from 2019 until 2023 created by the artist with the Indigenous audience in mind.

A launch of her book, *Samoan Queer Lives* (Little Island Press, NZ) co-edited by Kihara and Dan Taulapapa McMullin, will follow the keynote lecture.

This CISSC Happening is co-presented as part of the international 2019 Global Asia/Pacific Art Exchange, "GAX 2019 Tiohtiá:ke/Montreal: Asian Indigenous Relations in Contemporary Art," June 11-15, 2019, in collaboration with the Asian/Pacific/American Institute at NYU, NYU Global Research Initiatives, Office of the Provost; Concordia University Research Chair in Ethnocultural Art Histories; Art Speaks; Queer Media Database Project Canada Quebec; and the Gail and Stephen A. Jarislowsky Institute of Studies in Canadian Art. For complete program of exhibitions and conference: ethnoculturalarts.com; GAX2019Montreal@gmail.com.

Yuki Kihara

A native of Sāmoa, **Yuki Kihara** is an interdisciplinary artist whose work seeks to challenge dominant and singular historical narratives through visual arts, dance, and curatorial practice, engaging with postcolonial history and representation and how they intersect with race, gender, spirituality and sexual politics. Kihara lives and works in Sāmoa. The Metropolitan Museum of Art featured Kihara solo exhibition, *Living Photographs*, in 2008, and subsequently acquired her works for their permanent collection. Kihara's works are also in other major collections including The Los Angeles County Museum of Art, The British Museum, and Giorgio Armani and have been presented in numerous exhibitions including the Asia Pacific Triennial (2002 & 2015), Auckland Triennial (2009), Sakahān Quinquennial (2013), Daegu Photo Biennale (2014), Honolulu Biennial (2017), and Bangkok Art Biennale (2018). Kihara is a research fellow at The National Museums of World Cultures in The Netherlands.

Admission is free and open to the public.

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